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ABSTRACT

This report describes the Texas State Library Communications Network (TSLCN), which provides interlibrary loan (ILL) services to Texas public, special, and academic libraries. TSLCN is described as a network of ten regional referral centers, operated by means of contracts with major resource center (MRC) libraries, with the entire system under the coordination of the Texas State Library (TSL). It is noted that libraries transmit ILL requests via OCLC. Presented in the report are: (1) a discussion of the history and development of TSLCN; (2) a rationale for ILL services; (3) a detailed description of TSLCN services; (4) an evaluation of TSLCN based on fill rates, turnaround time, response time, and other measures of effectiveness; (5) details of the cost of the service; and (6) an analysis of TSLCN staffing and costs per staff member. Definitions of terms used in the report are also provided. (ESR)

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# INTERLIBRARY LOAN:

# A DESCRIPTION OF THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

Edward Seidenberg

Texas State Library
October 1982

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# PREFACE

The purpose of this report is to inform the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and other interested readers of the Texas State Library Communications Network.

This report is an attempt to decribe Texas' interlibrary loan network on both a general level and a detailed level. It was prepared in October, 1982 by the staff of the Network and Consulting Services Department, Library Development Division, Texas State Library.

This interlibrary loan network is a large and complex operation. To prepare this report, the writers sifted through a large amount of facts, figures and historical memos.

If additional information is desired or if questions arise, please contact myself or Thomas MacMorran at (512) 475-3564.

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# Interlibrary Loan: A Description of the Texas State Library Communications Network

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

Ten regional interlibrary loan referral centers, operated by means of contracts with the Major Resource Center (MRC) libraries, make up the Texas State Library Communications Network (TSLCN).

Each center provides reference services and materials from the MRC collection to the users of the public, academic and special libraries in the MRC regional service area. These centers also borrow materials for these libraries from other libraries in Texas and the nation using the OCLC interlibrary loan subsystem.

The operation of the centers is coordinated by the Texas State Library (TSL). Planning, training, contract administration, and the establishment of uniform policies and procedures are provided by Network and Consulting Services Department, a department of the Library Development Division.

Funding for this program comes from federal sources. While state funds are used to adminster the program at the State Library, all of the contracts rely on federal funds. A legislative amendment would be necessary to operate the network with state monies.

## DEFINITIONS

### Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loans are materials borrowed by one library from another library for the use of an individual. These materials can be books, photocopies or audiovisuals. In the TSLCN, most loans are books; 10 percent of the loans are photocopies and very few are audiovisuals. The individual can either request a specific piece of material, by title, or can submit a subject request, in which case the librarians will try to select any appropriate book or article on the topic.

### Texas State Library Communications Network (TSLCN)

The program of the Texas State Library is designed to provide interlibrary loan services to Texas public, special and academic libraries. By funding contracts with the major resource centers and with some academic libraries, libraries can borrow materials from each other via computer (OCLC).

**Region**

A multi-county area designated as a public library system. (See Map on cover)

**Major Resource Center Library** (MRC)

A large public library is designated as a "major resource center" and headquarters for a library system. The Texas State Library contracts with these MRCs to operate the interlibrary loan system. The ten MRCs are indicated on the map on the cover of this report. These cities are:

| | |
|---|---|
| Abilene | El Paso |
| Amarillo | Fort Worth |
| Austin | Houston |
| Corpus Christi | Lubbock |
| Dallas | San Antonio |

**Regional Interlibrary Loan Referral Center**

A unit located in a major resource center staffed to provide interlibrary loan referral services to the public, special and academic libraries within the region. Also handles requests for loans of material in the collection of the major resource center from libraries outside the region.

OCLC

The Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) is a not-for-profit corporation which operates a large data-base of bibliographic information for cataloging, interlibrary loan and other services; the data-base includes the records of 9 million books in 3400 libraries.

Referral

A referral occurs when a request can not be filled from the major resource center library's collection and must be sent to one or more other libraries.

**Transactions**

The total of requests from within and from outside the region. A request referred between centers will be counted as "within region" request at one center and "outside region" request at another. Requests that are counted more than once when individual center statistical reports are combined become "transactions."

## CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

### CHRONOLOGY OF THE INTERLIBRARY LOAN NETWORK

**1968** Creation of Texas State Library Communications Network (TSLCN)
Designation of 10 Major Resource Center (MRC) libraries and regions.

Grants-in-aid for library materials were given to MRCs as the means of compensating MRCs for providing interlibrary loan service to Area and Community (Size III) libraries.

Grants-in-aid were also made to Area (Size II) libraries for interlibrary loan service to their surrounding Community libraries. This tiered structure for public library requests was intended to buffer some of the workload off the MRCs and to encourage cooperative arrangements between neighboring Area and Community libraries.

This period was characterized by great diversity among MRCs in terms of their interlibrary loan service. Since MRCs could use their own discretion in staffing and equipping interlibrary loan offices, some offices were staffed with full-time professional librarians, but most had only part-time reference librarians.

The communications system was Telex machines for the public libraries. The Texas State Library also paid for TWX machines in the major academic libraries; however the State Library served to interface requests between public and academic libraries.

TSLCN was a public library network, with only a few requests (in comparison with later volume) switched over to academic libraries.

There were no locations or holdings data available, and queries were entirely random.

**1972-1973** First Holdings Information Became Available

In early 1973 the shelf lists of the ten MRC libraries were microfilmed and each MRC received a copy of all other MRC records.

To update the microfilm, the State Library collected from the MRCs' shelf list cards titles either added to or withdrawn from MRC collections. These cards were interfiled into a union card catalog maintained at the State Library.

Requests at the MRCs which could not be identified in the microfilm records were referred to the State Library. The State Library interlibrary loan switching center would verify the title, if possible, in the union catalog or would refer it (randomly) out of state or to an academic library.

1974 Texas Numeric Register (TNR) Created and Network was Reorganized

Texas State Library borrowed from Louisiana the computer programs for creating a numeric register, which was simply a computer-output-microfiche listing of all Library of Congress (LC) card numbers and symbols designating libraries which owned those titles. To use the TNR, a librarian would identify the LC card number of the requested title and would search the TNR by LC card number. A request would be placed with the library with the fewest number of holdings as a means of avoiding overloading any one library.

Participating in the TNR were the ten MRCs and approximately 25 academic libraries. The TNR was regularly updated by the State Library.

The State Library ceased paying for TWX machines in the academic libraries when the TNR went into existence and when federal funds became uncertain during the Nixon administration.

The TSLCN switched over to TWX machines.

The Area (Size II) libraries were dropped as interlibrary loan nodes in an effort to reduce costs and streamline the operation of the network.

Interlibrary loan contracts and system contracts were negotiated with MRCs and the grants-in-aid program was dropped. These contracts were negotiated with the intention of establishing professionally staffed centers which could be evaluated with actual unit costs and performance standards.

1978 TSLCN Becomes Multi-type

The Texas Numeric Register was continued, although it was starting to be phased out as the OCLC network developed.

The State Library awarded grants to the AMIGOS Bibliographic Council to input the current and retrospective holdings of the MRCs into the OCLC data based.

Special libraries were added to the libraries participating in the TSLCN. Although academic libraries had always had a role in TSLCN, their participation became formalized in 1978. This participation was particularly significant for two-year colleges.

1979 TSLCN Switches to OCLC Interlibrary Loan Subsystem

Texas became one of the first states to switch over to the OCLC Interlibrary Loan Subsystem. TWX machines were replaced with OCLC terminals.

1980 - 1981 Volume and Costs Increase

The number of requests for interlibrary loan materials was dramatically increasing. After years of development, the local libraries recognized the value of interlibrary loan and they solicited more and more requests from their patrons.

The costs of interlibrary loan contracts were also dramatically increasing. The effects of the high inflation rate in the general economy and the growth in the volume of interlibrary loan requests caused the budget for MRC contracts to increase over 40% in three years.

To hold down these costs, a number of policies were instituted:

- patrons could no longer request low-priced paperbacks (under $3.00) through interlibrary loan
- books published in the preceeding 12 months could not be requested
- the number of staff under contract was not increased

The State Library proposed the closing of two of the MRC referral centers as a cost-cutting measure. This proposal was not implemented because of the opposition of local librarians.

The State Library ceased to operate as a switching center.

The State Library began operating as a "reference backup" center, taking hard-to-fill subject requests from the MRCs and trying to fill these requests from the resources of the University of Texas at Austin and from information obtained through searches of computer data banks.

1982 Volume Drops But Costs Still High

The budget for the interlibrary loan program increased 19% to almost $1.2 million. Among the reasons for this increase are:

- personnel costs continued to increase at about 15% annually;
- to keep access open to the collections of academic libraries, service agreements were negotiated between the State Library and about 30 academic libraries; these libraries were reimbursed at $3.50 for each filled request amounting to a total cost of about $62,400;

- in response to many requests from the MRCs for increased administrative cost reimbursement, the following cost items were included in their contracts for the first time: depreciation on their collection, space use and utilities use; this totaled almost $24,500.

The volume of interlibrary loan requests dropped back to where it was during 1980. The reasons for this are:

- the closing of the Federal Archives and Records Center (FARC) in December 1981; FARC would have filled an estimated 3250 more requests if federal budget cuts had not forced its closing;

- the Dallas Public Library moved to its new building; with the collection unavailable, an estimated 2465 requests were unfilled during the 6 week closing;

- OCLC computer problems caused mary of the terminals to be "down" for long periods; because of the backlogs and delays which developed, some patrons may have been discouraged from submitting their requests;

- there was high turnover of staff in the referral centers with many vacancies remaining unfilled for long periods; of the 13.5 professional librarians, 7.5 left during the year and 5 of these were project managers; this turnover also contributed to backlogs and delays;

- the State Library stopped handling data base subject searching requests and "problem requests" from the MRCs; this change reduced the number of filled requests by an estimated 2350 fills.

1983 Studies Seek to Set Priorities and Reduce Costs

The Texas State Library will publish the reports of its year-long study of interlibrary loan users. A random sample of over 1000 Texans were surveyed to try to identify their borrowing needs and priorities.

Recommendations from a 1982 State Library study of telephone costs will be implemented during this year. By changing from collect calls to credit card, it will be possible to reduce long distance charges significantly.

Reimbursement to academic libraries was increased to $3.75 per filled request.

Because of the recently enacted Uniform Grants and Contracts Management Act, the contracts with major resource centers must now reimburse their administrative indirect costs at the amount they request. This will represent an increase of about 130% over the previous year. Because of this change in policy, the MRCs are no longer automatically reimbursed for space use, utilities or collection depreciation.

An expected enhancement of the OCLC interlibrary loan subsystem will provide increased statistical information on lending patterns. This could aid in any analysis of the network's operations or configuration.

## CHAPTER THREE: SERVICE RATIONALE

### INTRODUCTION

Interlibrary loan has existed in one form or another for as long as libraries have been in existence. There is evidence that an active, though somewhat undependable and leisurely interlibrary lending activity was conducted from the Alexandrian library in classical times.

With the explosion in information production, and a concurrent explosion in the cost of acquiring, processing, storing and circulating information materials in the late 20th century, resource-sharing networks have developed as a relatively economical means by which individual libraries may serve the increasingly diverse and sophisticated needs of their users.

### Public Library Collections

It has never been pratical, nor even possible for an individual library to collect all the information produced or to develop collections on the theory that there might be a use of materials at some unknown point in the future. Public library collection development is a practical, selective process that aims to match materials with the wide ranging needs of the general population. If all the Texas public library collections were combined, only 1.6 books and periodicals would be available for each Texan. This is miniscule compared with the holdings of colleges and universities; in 1981, Texas academic libraries owned over 60 books and periodicals for each student and faculty member.

### Disparity of Library Collections and Services

Even if every individual in the state lived within driving or walking distance of a major public or research library, there would still be a need for some sort of interlending arrangement. Public Library services to the citizens of Texas cover a broad spectrum of quality. In a few areas, there are simply no local public libraries. In many small communities, the public library is meagerly funded by local governments and must continually strive to meet the system membership requirements using local volunteers, fund drives and donations. Medium-sized communities fare somewhat better but are still far from accepted standards. The state's largest cities run large-scale, professionally managed libraries; even these, however, do not usually compare favorably with other large libraries across the nation.

The development and maintenance of an interlibrary loan network enables individual citizens to have equal and improved access to library materials and information, regardless of the size or quality of their hometown library.

Analysis of use patterns repeatedly show that smaller libraries use interlibrary loan, on a per capita basis, significantly more than large libraries. While cities over 75,000 people borrowed 4.6 books on interlibrary loan for every 1000 persons, towns of under 10,000 persons borrow 25.1 books for every 1000 people. This 1980 data indicates that small communities use this service about 5.5 times more than large urban areas.

In a similar vein, data shows that interlibrary loan represents a much larger part of the circulation of small libraries than it does of large libraries. While interlibrary loans will always be a very small part of any library's total circulation, it represents almost 5 times more of the circulation of small libraries than it does of large public libraries. In 1980, these loans amounted to almost .7% of the small library average book circulation. In libraries serving over 75,000 persons, interlibrary loans account for less than .15% of book circulation.

## Interlibrary Loan and Collection Development

Interlibrary loan is a service that appears to be a cost-effective alternative to the expenditure of similar amounts for books for local libraries. The reasons for this are:

Because system grants are allocated predominately on a population-based formula, the inbalance of access to resources between urban and rural areas, and the often unique material needs of interlibrary loan users cannot be met by simply disbursing this amount of money on to local libraries.

Interlibrary loan services provide valuable information which can guide collection development strategies, while at the same time preventing libraries from investing in materials of limited usefulness to general user populations. The service is an effective balance between the mission of local libraries to meet the information needs of their communities and the taxpaying individual's right to expect the library to serve his or her individual information needs.

It is more cost-effective to borrow a book which is not frequently used than it is to own that book. In 1982, the average purchase price of a hardback was about $25.50. The cost of cataloging that book at a large public library was about $7.75. Ignoring other costs of ownership, the unit cost of borrowing this book through the network was less than one-third of the purchase and cataloging expenses.

For some years, the State Library has asked the regional library systems to have the public libraries rank their program priorities. Most of the time interlibrary loan ranked as the first priority. This indicates the librarians' support for interlibrary loan as a supplement to their local collections.

## Related Grant Project

The Bibliographic Network Project is a separately budgeted program which enables MRC libraries to enter current and retrospective cataloging data into the OCLC data base. Funding for this program, instituted in 1978, covers some of the costs of entering and editing their holdings in the data base. One objective of this project is to expand the number of books available to fill interlibrary loan requests and, through the identification of locations of books, speed access to them. This project has assisted in funding the inclusion of over 1.1 million of the MRCs holdings through mid 1982.

During fiscal years 1978 to 1982, almost $1.1 million of federal funds were spent in this project. During 1983, an additional $204,000 will be spent.

## Uses of the Services

Data collected during the 1981 fill-rate study demonstrates that 81 percent of the interlibrary loan traffic in the TSLCN is for non-fiction materials, and that 54 percent is for materials published before 1975. Major traffic, identified by Dewey Classification, occurs in the following subject areas. The percentages indicate what proportion of the non-fiction traffic the subject represents.

| Technology (27%) | History (18%) |
|---|---|
| self-help materials | geography |
| management | travel |
| manufacturing | biography |
| agriculture | genealogy |
| other applied sciences | |
| **Social Sciences (17%)** | **Arts (13%)** |
| commerce | architecture |
| education | sports |
| statistics | music |
| social problems | theature |
| folk lore | visual arts |

With almost 60 percent of all interlibrary loan traffic occuring in these areas, and with 30 percent of the material being published prior to 1970, the data indicate that interlibrary loan is used for non-recreational business, self-improvement, and educational purposes to a large extent; the materials needed are often no longer in print and therefore unobtainable from bookstores or publishers.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE

Interlibrary loan referral centers are operated in ten of the largest public libraries in Texas. The State Library contracts with these Major Resource Center (MRC) libraries to staff and operate the centers. Any public, academic or special library in the state may place requests by a free telephone call to the referral center in its geographic region.

### Service Goal

TSLCN's service goal is to achieve a high level of user satisfaction. How quickly and how accurately interlibrary loan requests are filled are the most important factors in user satisfaction. Network policies and procedures are aimed at getting the right material, getting it quickly and getting it at minimum cost. This service has been promoted by:

- Instituting a policy of sending requests only to known locations rather than using a method of random querying. This reduces the amount of staff time and results in a higher and faster fill rate.

- Identifying locations of available material: the Texas Numeric Register was developed and produced; the initiation of the AMIGOS (OCLC) Bibliographic Network was funded; the MRCs are reimbursed for entering their holdings on OCLC; other cooperative union lists have been funded by grants.

- Using rapid communications systems for referrals: first teletype and then computer.

- Paying for telephone calls from libraries in the region to the interlibrary loan center to encourage quick transmittal of requests.

- Monitoring interlibrary loan centers to see that they respond to requests within 24 hours.

- Structuring the network so that requests are searched first in the ten largest public library collections to give them the best chance to be filled in the first collection searched.

- Conducting a continuing evaluation of network performance and costs while maintaining a receptivity to alternative network structures, organization, staffing, etc. in terms of how well they will meet the goal of user satisfaction and at what cost.

- Determining referral center staffing and budgets on the basis of manpower studies and statistical projections of workload.

### State Library Role

Prior to 1980, the State Library served as the center for switching an interlibrary loan request from an MRC to other libraries; the initiation of the OCLC interlibrary loan subsystem made this unnecessary.

For two years the State Library served in a backup capacity, taking hard-to-fill subject requests from MRCs. This service was terminated on September 1, 1981 for the following reasons:

- the desire of the Library Development Division to reduce staff in accord with the Governor's directives;
- the relatively low level of use of this service (the average number of fills was 2385 each year);
- the high unit cost which resulted from the low volume of requests (average cost per fill was $12.30);
- MRCs were improving their staff capabilities to handle these information requests;
- the desire of the State Library to fund a professional staff position with the responsiblity for developing cooperation among Texas libraries.

## HOW THE NETWORK WORKS

### Incoming Requests

The MRCs receive requests to borrow materials in two ways:

- Requests from the libraries in its region are telephoned into the interlibrary loan office by public, academic and special libraries.
- Requests from outside the region are sent to the MRC, as a known location for specific materials (as identified in the OCLC data base); these arrive via the computer terminal in the interlibrary loan office.

The MRC's local patrons generally make their requests at the reference desk, though in some cases they may go directly to the interlibrary loan office.

Pertinent information is recorded on a "transaction sheet," which serves as a documented record of business. The information needed to try to fill the request is entered on this form.

### Filling Requests

The interlibrary loan staff first searches the MRC collection to find materials to fill requests. If the materials are found, they are checked out and mailed to the requesting library, where they are checked out to the local patron.

Requests arriving via the terminal are handled in the same way. If materials are not available locally, or if there are special circumstances concerning availability of use of the materials, a sophisticated electronic mail system in the computer allows lenders and borrowers to communicate with each other. The system also provides automatic file maintenance, so that the status of transactions may be tracked.

Using the computer and an array of printed sources, interlibrary loan librarians search for locations of materials requested by their MRC users, and send requests to known locations over the computer.

**Referring Requests**

If materials are not available at the MRC receiving the request, the location where the item is held may be obtained on the terminal. The operator makes a workform and identifies five locations to query for the material. The computer automatically queries the locations until a response is made.

**Receiving Materials**

Although local libraries make requests through the MRC, which serves as their link to the national network, materials to fill requests are sent directly to the library making the request. When the patron returns the materials, the borrowing library sends them directly back to the lending library.

**Limitations on Service**

Certain materials may not be requested through TSLCN. These materials include:

- Best sellers (because of high local demand)
- Paperback books in print priced at $3.00 or less
- Most titles, especially fiction, published within the last calendar year (because of high local demand)
- Rare books, manuscripts, and books published before 1800. (Ordinarily do not circulate)
- Reference books (ordinarily do not circulate)
- Genealogical books (ordinarily do not circulate)
- Materials owned by the MRC for its own patrons

**Responsibilities**

The individual user has first responsibility for the safety and return of borrowed materials; secondary responsibility resides with the library through which the user made the request. If neither of these users meets their responsibility, the MRC through which the request was referred bears responsibility for its regional libraries. Punitive measures available to enforce responsibility among libraries may include a temporary withdrawal of service. This has seldom occured, however.

**Costs to User**

Generally, Texas libraries do not charge to lend their materials through interlibrary loan. Every effort is made to use libraries which do not charge these fees. If the material is only available upon payment of a handling fee, the patron is advised of this and given the opportunity to pay the fee or withdraw the request. Generally, the fees range from $3 to $8, with photocopies priced on the number of pages.

Rule 2.2 of the Library Systems Act prohibits local public libraries from charging additional handling fees. Postage may be collected from the patron if that is the local policy.

**Sources of Requests**

The following table indicates the amount and percentage of requests for materials by type of library. It shows that while the public library user is the heaviest user, other types of libraries are slowly increasing their use of the network.

Table #1
SOURCES OF REQUESTS

| Requests Made By: | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Texas Libraries | | | |
| Public | 123,202 (82%) | 120,949 (78%) | 110,190 (74%) |
| Academic | 6,849 ( 5%) | 9,868 ( 6%) | 10,433 ( 7%) |
| Special | 6,075 ( 4%) | 7,260 ( 5%) | 8,095 ( 6%) |
| Out of State Libraries | 13,668 ( 9%) | 16,992 (11%) | 19,316 (13%) |
| TOTALS | 149,794 | 155,069 | 148,034 |

**Sources of Fills**

The following table indicates the amount and percent of fills which were borrowed by type of library. The decrease in fills by "other libraries" is a result of the State Library ceasing its reference backup activities.

Table #2
SOURCES OF FILLS

| Fills Made By: | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Texas Libraries | | | |
| Public | 89,570 (74%) | 93,172 (76%) | 84,692 (76%) |
| Academic | 14,973 (12%) | 15,477 (12%) | 15,656 (14%) |
| Other | 7,227 ( 6%) | 5,678 ( 5%) | 1,902 ( 2%) |
| Out of State Libraries | 9,841 ( 8%) | 9,063 ( 7%) | 9,339 ( 8%) |
| TOTALS | 121,611 | 123,390 | 111,589 |

## CHAPTER FIVE: MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENSSS

The following definitions will be necessary to understand the data given below:

The **fill rate** is the percentage of total unique requests filled during the fiscal year. Fills are requests that are filled from any source, regardless of how many referrals had to be made to obtain the material.

**Fills from collection** is the number of fills made from all Major Resource Center library collections. It is a measure of how much demand is placed on these public libraries.

Table #3

| Year | Total RQs | Fills | Fill Rate | Fills/ Collection | % of RQs | % of Fills |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 | 149,794 | 121,611 | 81% | 89,570 | 60% | 74% |
| 1981 | 155,069 | 123,390 | 80% | 93,189 | 60% | 76% |
| 1982 | 148,034 | 111,589 | 76% | 84,319 | 57% | 76% |

The above table shows a decrease of 7,035 requests (4.5 percent) in requests between 1981 and 1982. A decrease in the number of fills of 11,801 (9.6%) also occurred.

Some explanations for this decline have already been discussed. The following list summarizes these explanations:

- 3875 Requests and 2465 fills: Dallas Public Library closed for six weeks
- 3251 Requests and fills: Fort Worth Archives and Records Center ceased filling requests
- 2350 fills: The State Library ceased it reference back-up services.

These account for an estimated 7126 requests and 8066 fills.

If these requests and fills had occurred, the outputs for 1982 would have been 155,160 requests (.06% over 1981) and 119,655 fills (3 percent less). This decrease in fills may be due to other factors such as high staff turnover and the hiring of numerous new staff members to replace the experienced, trained ones who left. The fact that there would have been no growth in requests could be due to this staff turnover, because a high level of telephone and workshop contact with local librarians is necessary to elicit requests.

**Effectiveness of Individual MRCs**

The table below gives the fill rate for each of the interlibrary loan centers for the past three years. This is computed by dividing the total number of fills from that MRC collection by the number of transactions it handled that year.

The key factor in the variability of these rates is the quality of the MRC collection in meeting the information requested. Another contributing factor can be the skill of the interlibrary loan librarians in ferretting out the requested information in a timely way; there is a delicate balance between spending enough time on a request before declaring it "unfilled," and spending too much time on some requests and having to cancell others because of large backlogs. The quality and timeliness of the MRC catalog also influence the ease of searching and the fill rate.

Table #4
FILL RATES FOR MRCs BY YEAR

| | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 |
|---|---|---|---|
| ABILENE | 47 % | 45 % | 43 % |
| AMARILLO | 52 | 43 | 48 |
| AUSTIN | 46 | 50 | 44 |
| CORPUS CHRISTI | 37 | 43 | 46 |
| DALLAS | 46 | 48 | 45 |
| EL PASO | 39 | 39 | 34 |
| FORT WORTH | 45 | 46 | 46 |
| HOUSTON | 54 | 53 | 50 |
| LUBBOCK | 42 | 40 | 38 |
| SAN ANTONIO | 49 | 42 | 29 |
| Average | 46 % | 46 % | 43 % |

**Turnaround Time**

"Turnaround time" is the amount of time that elapses between the initiation of a request by a user and the receipt of the materials by the user. The turnaround times are calculated for two categories of requests:

- Requests filled by the MRC for the region
- Requests referred to and filled by other libraries

The State Library computes the turnaround time for each of the interlibrary loan centers four times per year. These are cumulated to obtain figures that represent the average time for the whole network.

The data to compute this statistic is collected on a sampling basis, and was only done in previous years for those requests which were referred to and filled by other libraries.

The statewide averages are shown below:

| Fiscal Year | Average Turnaround (Days) for RQs filled by MRC | Average Turnaround (Days) for RQs filled by other libraries |
|---|---|---|
| 1980 | N.A. | 28.3 |
| 1981 | N.A. | 18.3 |
| 1982 | 10.3 | 28.3 |

These figures demonstrate the value of filling a request at the MRC. If more requests can be filled at the MRC, users will receive much quicker service. When a request has to be referred to another library, the time required increases dramatically.

The increase in the turnaround time between 1981 and 1982 is attibutable to numerous staff vacancies at the interlibrary loan centers and the poor performance of the OCLC computer during the year.

**Response Time**

"Response time" is the amount of time required to perform each task needed to complete an interlibrary loan request. Through a sampling method, requests received by telephone and via OCLC are tagged and entered into the workflow. They receive no special treatment. In this way, a measure of the length of time for the completion of requests, either by filling them from the MRC collection or by means of referral to other libraries, can be determined.

By itself, response time can indicate efficiencies or alert management to the existence of problems at referral centers. As a part of turnaround time, response time is one variable over which a referral center can exercise some control. Hence, response time is included as a performance standard in interlibrary loan contracts.

The table below identifies the two categories of response time, the 1982 average response time for the network and the high and low response time for each category. An analysis of the individual centers' response times would provide an indication of their efficiencies.

| FY 1982 | Telephone Response Time (in hours) | OCLC Response Time (in hours) | TSLCN Average Response Time (in hours) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Network Average | 34.3 | 7.3 | 20.8 |
| Range among MRCs | 13.4 - 53.7 | 3.6 - 12 | 8.2 - 33.0 |

## CHAPTER SIX: COSTS OF THE SERVICE

### Rationale

The Texas State Library has viewed the provision of interlibrary loan as a responsibility which is shared by the state. This is the vehicle for the state to try to equalize access to information to all residents, regardless of the quality of local libraries.

The state relies on existing collections in large Texas public and academic libraries to fill most of the requests for information. Academic libraries are reimbursed for their fills at a rate of $3.75 in 1983. The MRCs are compensated in other ways:

(1) the state funds the interlibrary loan staff and operating costs; these are costs which the MRC would have incurred in providing the service to its own patrons;

(2) postage costs for materials borrowed by MRC patrons are paid by the contract;

(3) system programs can provide additional collection development funds to the MRC because it supplies the members with interlibrary loans;

(4) the Bibliographic Network project provides monies to MRCs because they are interlibrary loan centers;

(5) sometimes the computer terminal and other office equipment can be beneficial to the MRC after the normal workday is over.

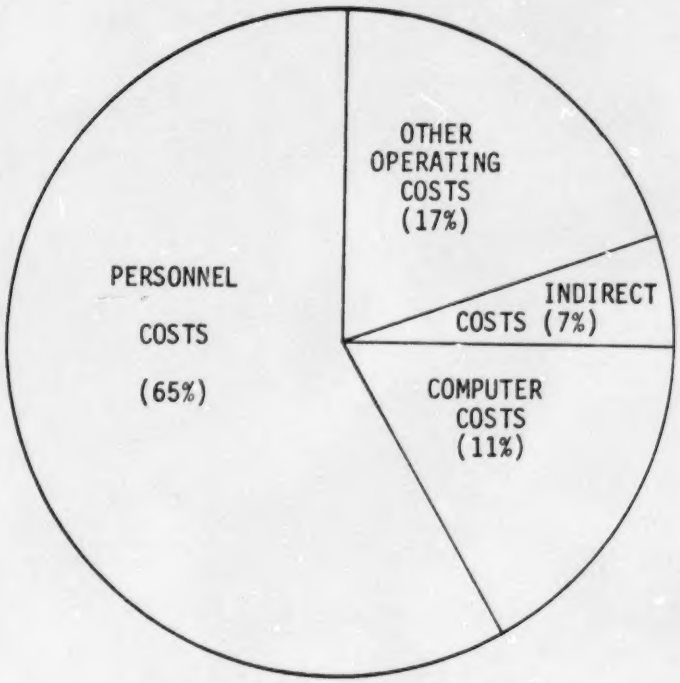
Although state funds are used to operate the headquarters office at the State Library, all other costs are funded with federal money.

**Costs by Expenditure Category**

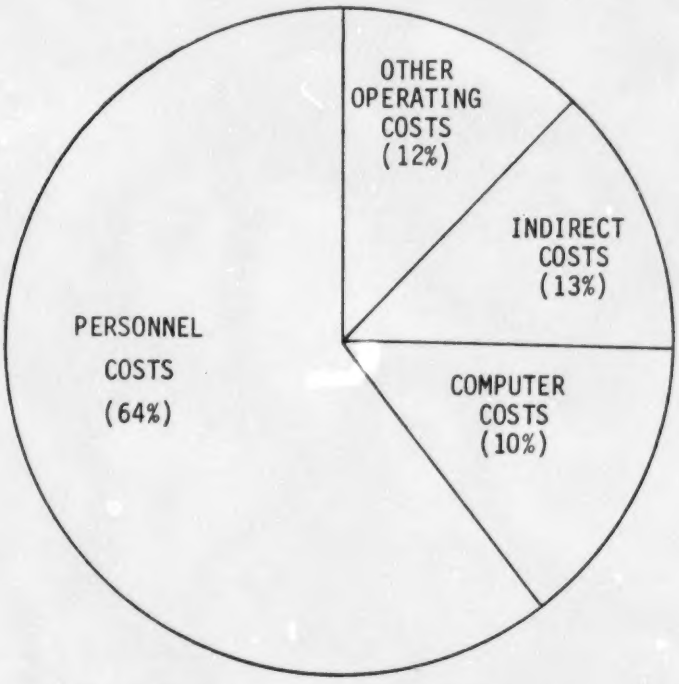
The following table shows the main cost components in the interlibrary loan network program. The percentage indicates the ratio between each item and that year's total cost.

Table #5
TSLCN BUDGETED COSTS

| | FY 1980 | FY 1981 | FY 1982 | FY 1983 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Salaries & Benefits | $532,330 (63%) | $614,894 (62%) | $688,277 (58%) | $798,870 (58%) |
| Computer Equipment & Services | 73,271 ( 9%) | 98,242 (10%) | 111,911 ( 9%) | 122,878 ( 9%) |
| Telephone Equipment & Services | 53,608 ( 6%) | 56,719 ( 6%) | 56,281 ( 5%) | 47,783 ( 3%) |
| Postage | 28,625 ( 3%) | 34,972 ( 3%) | 46,758 ( 4%) | 51,689 ( 4%) |
| Other Operating Expenses | 37,574 ( 4%) | 61,455 ( 6%) | 67,962 ( 6%) | 41,510 ( 3%) |
| Local Delivery Services | -0- | 1,200 ( 0%) | 1,600 ( 0%) | 3,215 ( 0%) |
| Audit Costs | 9,550 ( 1%) | 9,772 ( 1%) | 11,432 ( 1%) | 10,834 ( 1%) |
| Indirect Costs | 27,988 ( 3%) | 42,277 ( 4%) | 72,857 ( 6%) | 165,461 (12%) |
| Total Contract Amounts | 762,946 (91%) | 919,531 (92%) | 1,057,078 (89%) | 1,242,240 (91%) |
| Academic Reimbursement | -0- | -0- | 62,373 ( 5%) | 51,764 ( 4%) |
| TSL Headquarters | 77,378 ( 9%) | 80,102 ( 8%) | 69,979 ( 6%) | 77,405 ( 5%) |
| Total Network Costs | $840,324 | $999,633 | $1,189,430 | $1,371,409 |




FY 1982 CONTRACTS ($1.06 Million)




FY 1983 CONTRACTS ($1.25 Million)

## Unit Costs

Unit costs represent the average cost for each unit of service. The table below gives the unit costs for the past three years:

Table #6
INTERLIBRARY LOAN UNIT COSTS

| | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | Adjusted 1982 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Requests | 148,192 | 155,069 | 148,034 | 155,160 |
| Cost per Request | $5.67 | $6.45 | $8.04 | $7.06 |
| Number of Fills | 121,611 | 123,390 | 111,589 | 119,655 |
| Cost per Fill | $6.91 | $8.10 | $10.66 | $9.15 |

To make the unit costs for 1982 more comparable with those of previous years, an estimated number of 7126 requests and 8066 fills has been added because of reasons previously described on page 6. In addition, the following costs are subtracted out because they occurred for the first time during this year: $62,373 for academic library reimbursement; $24,326 for space use, utilities and depreciation by the MRCs; and $7,500 from lapse salaries for headquarters office equipment and additional educational video tapes.

## Use of Unit Cost Data

The computation and analysis of unit cost data is valuable to compare the effectiveness of the network across a number of years. It must be viewed from the context of the budgeting cycle however.

Because contract amounts are fixed by June of the preceeding fiscal year, unanticipated increases or decreases in the volume of requests during the year will cause the unit cost to be lower or higher than expected. There is very little flexibility in setting staffing levels or adjusting contract amounts once the contracts are signed. Thus, the State Library cannot increase or decrease the staff of the interlibrary loan offices until the year after the volume of requests increased or decreased. There is no possibility of shifting staff from an MRC where business has slowed down to an MRC that is handling many requests until the next contract.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: STAFFING ANALYSIS

### Introduction

The level of staffing which is available at each interlibrary loan office and for the network as a whole is very important. It is a key factor in determining the following aspects of interlibrary loan services:

- Total Cost
- Unit Cost
- Number of Requests
- Number of Fills
- Timeliness
- User Satisfaction

### Procedure

The State Library network headquarters follows the following procedures to determine the number of staff in each interlibrary loan office.

In the middle of each fiscal year, projections and budgets for the coming year are computed. The State Library staff looks at how much activity has taken place in previous years; the volume of requests submitted in the first six months of that fiscal year is included in the calculations. From this data, an estimation is made of how much activity will occur in the following year.

These projections are analyzed to determine the number of staff needed to handle this volume of activity. The data which is used during this step is based on a staffing activity study conducted by the State Library.

Once the amount of activity and the number of staff has been computed for each office, the local salary and fringe benefit tables are applied and other operating costs are computed.

Any negotiations with an MRC over the contract amount take place during the early summer. Contracts are prepared and mailed by August.

The following tables provide information on the amount, cost and efficiency of the staff at each interlibrary loan office. These figures exclude the State Library headquarters costs and staffing. In 1981, the State Library had 4 people; during 1982 and 1983 there are 3 people.

Table #7 shows the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff at each office during fiscal year 1981, 1982 and 1983. It also shows the cost per staff and what percentage that cost has increased between 1981 and 1983. To compute the cost per staff, the number of FTEs was divided into the total contract amount.

Table #7

| | Staffing (FTEs) 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | Cost Per Staff 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | % Cost Increase 1981 to 1983 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abilene | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | $17,969 | $22,344 | $23,714 | 32.0 |
| Amarillo | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 21,625 | 24,073 | 30,643 | 41.7 |
| Austin | 5.5 | 5.5 | 4.6 | 22,506 | 25,169 | 36,128 | 61.6 |
| Corpus Christi | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 22,725 | 26,471 | 30,373 | 33.7 |
| Dallas | 7.0 | 8.0 | 8.25 | 19,885 | 23,253 | 28,123 | 41.4 |
| El Paso | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 24,169 | 29,433 | 29,881 | 23.6 |
| Fort Worth | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 19,038 | 21,912 | 31,810 | 67.1 |
| Houston | 7.5 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 23,686 | 25,801 | 27,424 | 15.6 |
| Lubbock | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 21,987 | 27,298 | 28,662 | 30.4 |
| San Antonio | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 18,213 | 21,355 | 22,118 | 21.4 |
| Total* | 43.5 | 43.5 | 43.35 | 21,139 | 24,301 | 28,656 | 35.6 |

*Excludes headquarters staffing and costs.

Table #8 shows the number of unique requests and the number of total fills handled by each staff member, on the average. While 1981 and 1982 are based on the actual performance of those years, 1983 is a projected estimate. If the requests and fills again decline as they did in 1982, these estimates will be wrong. In looking at the 1983 estimates for requests per staff, it does appear that the number of requests is overestimated; without an increase in efficienty it does not seem likely that the requests per staff can climb to the estimated level from the 1981 and 1982 levels. The 1983 estimates assume an increase in requests of about 10% over 1982 or 5% over 1981; the growth rate of fills is projected at 20% over 1982 or 10% over 1981.

Table #8

| | Requests Per Staff | | | Fills Per Staff | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1981 | 1982 | Estimated 1983 | 1981 | 1982 | Estimated 1983 |
| Abilene | 2787 | 2907 | 3025 | 2314 | 2287 | 2750 |
| Amarillo | 3185 | 2656 | 3350 | 2909 | 2158 | 3300 |
| Austin | 3508 | 3595 | 4325 | 2818 | 2724 | 3725 |
| Corpus Christi | 2716 | 3332 | 3650 | 2339 | 2663 | 3325 |
| Dallas | 4132 | 3484 | 3975 | 3001 | 2334 | 2900 |
| El Paso | 2716 | 2840 | 2835 | 1913 | 1912 | 1950 |
| Fort Worth | 3362 | 3261 | 3850 | 2616 | 2440 | 3100 |
| Houston | 3659 | 3588 | 3825 | 2939 | 2839 | 3275 |
| Lubbock | 3262 | 4140 | 3735 | 2564 | 3132 | 2975 |
| San Antonio | 3969 | 3483 | 3400 | 3381 | 2755 | 3200 |
| AVERAGE | 3481 | 3403 | 3775 | 2782 | 2565 | 3150 |